The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accurately and officially interpretations of matters affecting labor concerning the industrial, legislative, and political fields, and carrying other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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WE PLEDGE—
1 BILLION DOLLARS
IN
WAR SAVINGS BONDS
FOR VICTORY

WHOLE NO. 1746 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 1944 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 24, NO. 39

FACING *the* FACTS

With PHILIP PEARL

America's fighting forces are now discovering that they have important allies within the territory of the occupied countries of Europe and even inside Nazi Germany itself.

This was officially disclosed by Gen. Dwight K. Eisenhower in issuing instructions to workers inside Germany to take "immediate action according to the prearranged plan."

The General was addressing "organised cells," or what labor calls the underground movement. The nucleus of that movement in Germany—as well as in Italy, France, Belgium, Holland—are the surviving remnants of organized labor which had escaped Hitler's clutches and gone into temporary hiding.

Through the long years of oppression, suffering and slavery, these underground movements have been kept alive and functioning with help from the trade unions of this country. Funds and printing presses and radio equipment were secretly smuggled into occupied Europe by American labor in order to pave the way for internal revolution against Hitler at the appropriate time.

Antonini's Role

The full story of the anti-Hitler underground in Europe and its relations with American labor cannot yet be told. But it can be revealed in part that among those who publicly condemned these activities of American labor, which are now proving so beneficial to the cause of victory, was Westbrook Pegler.

One of the American Labor leaders who was extremely active in maintaining contact and supplying help to the underground in Europe is Luigi Antonini, Vice President of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union and chairman of the Italian-American Labor Council.

Mr. Antonini is now in Italy as a representative of the American Federation of Labor to investigate the extent to which American labor can now give further help to the workers of Italy in organizing the trade unions which will serve as a buttress for democracy in that country during the post-war period.

For many years, while things looked darkest, Mr. Antonini directed efforts to smuggle aid to the anti-Fascist forces in Italy. You will remember, perhaps, that when the time came these underground forces struck against Mussolini's regime, deposed with the Italian dictator and made peace with the United Nations forces, thus making the task of invading Italy that much easier.

It can truthfully be said that the successful uprising of the Italian underground saved many American lives. American labor deserves a share of credit for that result.

The Time-Bomb

The amazingly rapid liberation of France by the Allied armies also was materially helped by the French labor movement. Frank Fenton, AFL Director of Organization, recently returned from a visit to the battlefields of France. He reported that the survivors of the French labor movement had formed the spearhead of the French underground which went into action and demoralized the Nazis from the rear while they tried to defend themselves against our invasion forces.

The same story held true in Belgium and Holland. And, if we are any judge it will also turn out that way when the final plunge into Germany is launched.

What is the situation in Germany? It is the fact that millions of imported foreign workers are now employed there—slave workers who hate Hitler more than they love life. Nazi fears of these hostile workers have come out into the open recently. The German people have been warned to be on guard. A stab in the back from them. Nazi leaders admit many of these slave workers have deserted to the Allied armies and now fight with them. General Eisenhower discloses now that these underground forces have been supplied with arms and ammunition.

The potential time-bomb inside Germany is now ticking away and at the right moment—the moment when the Allied armies crash through Hitler's fortifications from the front—it will explode in Hitler's rear.

Price Controls Must Be Maintained Even After Victory, Green Insists

Washington, D. C. — AFL President William Green cautioned the Government and the OPA against any move to abandon price controls as soon as the war in Europe is won.

Such action, he warned in a public statement issued by the Executive people "into a destructive booby-trap planted on the very threshold of post-war prosperity."

The greatest single threat to full employment after victory, Mr. Green declared, would be failure to continue existing price controls until "we complete the readjustments of our economy and achieve a basis for post-war stability."

He insisted that as reconversion progresses the civilian products industry is allowed to make be kept under price controls. He pointed out that this would not work any hardship on industry because production costs have been lowered and labor productivity has vastly increased.

At the same time, Mr. Green called upon the OPA to offer special protection to small business and to those firms which will have a small initial volume of production and accompanying high costs. Such price adjustments, he said, should be temporary and self-terminating. He added:

"The number of items to be brought back into production, while relatively small and therefore not cumbersome to administer, is vital to the cost of living and the standard of living of the people in the years to come. We must not allow these essential household utensils to be priced out of reach of the mass of consumers. Nor must we allow that workers making these goods be denied full employment opportunity by speculative price policies.

"The full impact of inflationary pressure may not come for six or seven months after victory. Now if there is a temporary sag in prices after the cessation of hostilities the public must not be fooled into the abandonment of price controls. There was such a short-lived sag after the armistice at the end of the last war, but it was followed by a swift and breathtaking runaway inflation which brought in its wake wholesale bankruptcy of business, evictions and destitution to thousands of farmers and large-scale unemployment to wage earners. We must not allow ourselves to be pushed into a destructive booby-trap planted on the very threshold of post-war prosperity by abandoning price control as soon as the war is won."

Workers Forgotten Men Of America As Congress Neglects Human Needs

Washington, D. C.—American workers are to be the forgotten men and women in the reconversion period unless Congress changes its mind after election day.

The accumulated George bill which was adopted by Congress before adjournment offers no protection or security for workers who may lose their jobs when war production is curtailed in the factories in the west.

The House refused to accept the only two sections of the George bill which sought to cut any measure of security —one providing travel expenses for stranded war workers and the other extending job insurance benefits to government workers in shipyards, arsenals and other establishments.

Leaders of both parties talked about more generous treatment of workers when Congress reconvenes after election, but Friends of labor condemned such delay.

"We are told," Senator George D. Aiken said, "that Congress will have now to consider protection for jobless workers. It seems rather peculiar that men can work day and night over property and dollars and cents, but cannot give consideration to human beings."

"That does seem peculiar," replied Senator Alben W. Barkley, "but there are many types of peculiar people, and some of them find their way into legislative halls."

Labor's chief demand—for a uniform, national system of unemployment compensation with increased benefits to serve as unemployment insurance during the reconversion period—was defeated by both Houses of Congress. As a result, the present, varying state systems of unemployment compensation, which even such conservative national leaders as War Mobilization Director Byrnes and Bernard M. Baruch have denounced as inadequate, will remain in force.

Meany Opens AFL's Final Attack On Wage-Freeze

Frey Demands Government Act

Washington, D. C.—John P. Frey, President of the AFL Metal Trades Department, demanded before the War Labor Board that the government "honor" a 1942 wage contract which pledged wage increases to hundreds of thousands of shipyard workers if the cost of living went up.

Making a "personal statement" at a hearing he said:

"We are not here pleading with your board. We are here to tell your board some things, the telling of which is perhaps long overdue."

Frey declared that the AFL unions had an agreement which tied wage rates to living costs but that in 1942 at the request of President Roosevelt they accepted less than the agreement provided. That agreement provided for a 1943 wage review to adjust pay scales in accordance with changes in living costs, the union leader added, and it had not been carried out although the government was a party to it.

"It is an open question," Mr. Frey asserted, "if the government fails to carry out the provisions of an agreement it has negotiated with labor, whether labor is any longer bound by other provisions of such an agreement."

Postal Unions Ask Congress Vote On Modest Pay Increase Proposal

Washington, D. C.—"Exceedingly modest" requests for permanent increases in the wages of the nation's postal employes were presented before the Senate Post Office Committee by leading labor representatives.

William C. Hushing, chairman of the AFL Legislative Committee, urged favorable action on measures pending before the committee, including the Mead bill, which provides for a $400 annual boost in pay scales instead of the temporary $300 increase voted last year.

William G. Doherty, President of the National Association of Letter Carriers, told the Senators that more than nineteen years had elapsed since Congress had granted the last permanent pay increase for letter carriers. He charged that the letter carriers are not receiving fair treatment from the government and demanded that their needs be given as much consideration as workers in private employment.

The 10 percent withholding tax on income has more than wiped out the $300 raise given the letter carriers last year, Mr. Doherty said.

Three Senators immediately voiced their endorsement of the legislation. They were Senators Wagner, Tunnell and Langer. The latter declared the increase should be $1,000 a year instead of merely $400. Senator Mead, author of the bill, indicated that he would move for prompt action as soon as Congress resumes sessions after the election.

William J. Horner, representing the 50,000 members of the National Federation of Post Office Clerks, also delivered telling arguments in favor of the bill. He pointed out that the postal service is "one of the most essential branches of the government" and that its personnel "is comprised of loyal, faithful, efficient employes who are merely seeking simple justice."

Other AFL organizations which urged passage of the Mead bill at the hearing included the Railway Mail Association, the Rural Letter Carriers and the Special Delivery Messengers.

WLB And FDR Expected To Bow To Demands For Break In Wage Formula

Washington, D. C.—Launching the final phase of the American Federation of Labor's fight to break the wage freeze, AFL Secretary-Treasurer George Meany told the War Labor Board action is overdue to remedy injustice to the nation's workers and to safeguard America from a post-war depression.

At the conclusion of the Board's public hearings it will submit a report to President Roosevelt making recommendations with regard to the future of the Little Steel formula. Indications are that the Board will urge relaxation of the formula and that the President will authorize such action within the next few weeks, but as yet there is no indication of the form or extent of the relief expected.

Mr. Meany, in opening the AFL case against the wage-freeze, charged that it not only has reduced the real income of the nation's wage earners but that it is unjust to the millions of workers now serving in the armed forces, "who have every reason to expect their government to honor its promise that it would maintain their living standards" in their absence.

"The long delay that has ensued since the filing of this petition by the American Federation of Labor members of the Board merely aggravates these injustices that the nation's workers and fighters have suffered," Mr. Meany added.

Mr. Meany laid special emphasis on the disastrous effects of the wage-freeze on post-war economic conditions. Full production and employment after the war ends, he declared, depends entirely on the maintenance of the purchasing power of the nation's consumers, which is impossible with inadequate wages.

"We can not afford to wait until we are suddenly thrown into the post-war period to decide what to do about wages. Unless we act before victory has been achieved, the question of wages as a factor in reconversion period will be left to be decided by the economic forces involved. Strikes, strife and economic chaos will result. We feel that labor has a right to expect this board to give favorable action now upon its request."

Gov. Dewey Promises Labor Jobs, High Wage, Security

West Coast Talks Seen As Republican Bid For Labor Vote

Los Angeles—In a series of campaign speeches on the West Coast, Governor Thomas E. Dewey of New York, Republican Presidential candidate, made a determined bid for the labor vote by pledging himself to support collective bargaining, to work for full employment at high wages and to expand the nation's social security program.

At the same time, Mr. Dewey hilarity attacked the New Deal's labor record, blaming most of the wartime strikes on the White House and assailing the repeated crises which have developed in the handling of labor disputes.

He charged that Secretary of Labor Perkins, "an estimable lady," had been Secretary of Labor "in name only" and promised, if elected, to replace her with a labor leader.

Opening his assaults on the Administration's labor policy in an address at Seattle Mr. Dewey told the wartely that the Connally-Smith Act has not worked and that its provisions which expire at the close of the war should never be renewed.

Most of his criticism was directed at the War Labor Board, which he accused of delays and bungling that have caused suffering for workers and managers and owners.

On the positive side, Mr. Dewey said he would abolish many of the "wasteful, competing bureaus" now handling labor questions and would "divide social security powers and duties into the one place where they belong, in the Department of Labor." He added:

"We must have full employment. It must be at a high wage level. We must have security of the individual from loss of his earning power through no fault of his own. We must have protection of the individual against the hazards of old age. We must do these things within the framework of free—and I mean free—collective bargaining."

Mr. Dewey developed his ideas on social security in his address here in Los Angeles. He advocated widening the coverage of the social security laws to include 20 million persons not now participating, including agricultural and domestic workers and self-employed persons. He also urged return of the United States Employment Service to State control and also the continuation of unemployment compensation under State administration.

Observers felt that Mr. Dewey had gone far beyond the limit of the Old Republican Party and had assumed leadership of the more liberal element of his party in these addresses.

In all his speeches Mr. Dewey stressed that maximum production and full employment can only come under an administration which encourages the expansion of business and inspires confidence among the nation's industrial leaders.

Excerpts From Gov. Dewey's Talk

Seattle.—Excerpts from Governor Dewey's address here which was particularly addressed to labor follow:

"The National Labor Relations Act is a good and necessary law. It acknowledged the trend of our times and will continue to be the law of the land. But that law has been working badly. It has failed to secure the industrial harmony we sought. It has failed because under the present administration the whims of bureaucrats take the place of government by law. When, on the railroads, where an order of mediation had been painstakingly created, we stood last December on the brink of a paralysing strike. That was only because one-man government could not keep its hands off legislation previously agreed to.

There is another reason why the National Labor Relations Act has not worked as it should. Our labor relations right down the line have been smothered under a welter of agencies, boards, commissions and bureaus.

For twelve straight years of New Deal bungling the Department of Labor has been left in the hands of an estimable lady who has been Secretary of Labor in name only. For all practical purposes we have neither a Secretary of Labor nor a Department of Labor today.

The Democratic Congressmen Smith and Democratic Senator Connally produced the Smith-Connally Act which they promised would solve all problems. Honest men were willing to believe that nothing could make the situation worse. So the statute was passed. It has not solved the problem.

In the twelve months following the passage of that Act there were 3,359 strikes. In the twelve months following the passage of that act there were 4,034 strikes.

That law—the Smith-Connally Act—will expire with the termination of the war, as it should. The provisions of this law and the other New Deal interferences with free collective bargaining should never be renewed.

The right of workers to bargain collectively, or together—the right to strike—is one of the fundamental rights of free men. It has sometimes been abused. But what has caused that abuse. Let's get the answer to this one straight for the record, too.

The New Deal is exclusively responsible for most of the serious wartime strikes. The chief blame goes directly into the White House and to its appointees at the top of all the labor agencies. The War Labor Board has supreme power over the vital matters of wages and conditions of employment. Whether by design or incompetence its practice has been to stall—weeks, months, sometimes years—before issuing decisions. For that reason, too, the working man and working woman and their families have had to suffer.

I propose that we shall have government by law after January 20, 1945. Here is the first thing to be done. We must have, from the ranks of labor, a new Secretary of Labor and a new Secretary of the Department.

Second, the functions of the Department of Labor must be put back into the Department of Labor.

Third, we shall abolish many of those wasteful, competing bureaus filled with personnel quarreling for jurisdiction while American citizens wait and wait. We shall put their powers and their duties into the one place where they belong, in the Department of Labor.

Finally, just as we shall abolish unnecessary bureaus and agencies, we shall abolish privilege for one group over any other group.

There is no question where we want to go during these peacetime years for which we are to begin our plans now. We want to establish equality before business, labor and agriculture. We must have full employment. It must be at a high wage level. We must have protection of the individual from loss of his earning power through no fault of his own. We must have protection of the individual against the hazards of old age. We must do these things within the framework of free—and I mean free—collective bargaining.

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To reach these goals we must increase, not decrease, our standard of living. We must increase, not decrease, our production.

If there be those who would turn back the course of collective bargaining, they are doomed to a bitter disappointment. We are not going back to anything, not to bread lines, not to leaf raking, not to settling labor disputes with guns and gas bombs, not to wholesale farm foreclosures, not to another New Deal depression with ten million unemployed.

We are going forward. The American working man and his family can go forward. They will go forward in the size of their pay envelope, in the improvement of working conditions, in their possession of more and more of the good things of life.

WORKERS RESPOND TO ARMY'S NEEDS

Washington, D. C.—Lieutenant General Brehon B. Somervell, chief of the army service forces, announced that American workers boosted production of munitions and supplies for the army during August by 10.7 percent.

That brought output figures to the highest level since last February, overcoming the summer slump, Somervell said. He paid tribute to workers for "putting their backs into the job of getting out enough arms and equipment, on time."

Most significant, he revealed, is that the chief increases were in items which had been sadly short. "The response has been most gratifying," he said.

LABOR MAN RENAMED PANAMA U. S. MARSHAL

Washington, D. C.—John E. Hushing, who has completed two four-year terms as United States marshal for the Canal Zone, was renominated by President Roosevelt and confirmed by the U. S. Senate for an additional term of 8 years.

Mr. Hushing is a machinist-toolmaker by trade and has been a member of the International Association of Machinists in good standing for 39 years.

N. Y. PAINTERS GIVE DAY'S PAY TO RELIEF

New York City.—For the fourth successive year painters throughout the city turned over a day's pay of $13 on Sept. 20 to be distributed among the Red Cross and 24 other war relief and charity organizations. It was announced by District Council 9 of the Brotherhood of Painters, Decorators and Paperhangers, American Federation of Labor. Since 1941 the painters have raised $130,000 in this manner, according to the union.

Taking part in the Work for Victory Day drive for the first time this year will be the special automotive craft branch of the council, including the scenic artists, sign pictorial painters, screen carpenters, field and department store painters, paint makers and paint salesmen.

Roosevelt Extols Labor, Hits GOP Record In Talk

Excerpts From President's Speech

Washington, D. C.—Excerpts from President Roosevelt's address before the International Brotherhood of Teamsters dinner here follow:

We all know certain people will make it a practice to depreciate the accomplishments of labor—who even attack labor as unpatriotic.

They keep tabs up on us for three years and six months. But then, for some unaccountable reason, they change their tune every four years—just before election day.

When votes are at stake they suddenly discover that they really love labor, and are eager to protect it from its old friends.

I got quite a laugh, for example—and I am sure that you did—when I read this plank in the Republican platform adopted at their national convention in Chicago last July:

"The Republican party accepts the purposes of the National Labor Relations Act, the Wage and Hour Act, the Social Security Act, and all other Federal statutes designed to promote and protect the welfare of American working men and women, and we promise a fair and just administration of these laws."

Many of the Republican leaders and Congressmen and candidates, who shouted enthusiastic approval of that plank in that convention hall, would not even recognize these progressive laws if they met them in broad daylight.

Indeed, labor have personally spent years of effort and energy—and much money—in fighting every one of those laws in the Congress, in the press and in the courts, ever since this Administration began to advocate them and enact them into law.

That is a fair example of their insincerity and their inconsistency.

The whole purpose of Republican oratory these days seems to be to switch labels. They object to persons. But every time people that the Democratic party was responsible for the 1929 crash and depression, and the Republican party was responsible for all social progress under the New Deal.

Imitation may be the sincerest form of flattery—but I am afraid that in this case it is the most obvious common or garden variety of fraud.

Who originated the idea of the "square deal" and "new deal" as the New Deal? I think not.

The President assailed labor-baiters who prefer to pick on occasional strikes and who ignore the vast proportion of production which is going on in this war, which he listed in detail. In obvious reference to John L. Lewis, he said: "Responsible leaders have condemned by every responsible national labor leader but one—and that one, incidentally, is certainly not among my supporters."

Discussing post-war plans on the home front, the President declared that the "fruits of victory this time must not be applied to the old inner corners." The keynote of "all we propose to do" can be summed up in one word—"jobs," he said. On the subject of wages, he declared:

"We have a definite policy which will sustain the purchasing power of labor—by that means more production and more jobs.

"The present policies of wages and prices were conceived in the days when the needs of the great masses of people. They stopped inflation. They kept prices on a reasonably stable level. Through the demobilization period we will be careful to see that the same objective in mind—to serve the needs of the great masses of people."

Teamsters Cheer FDR In First Political Speech Of Campaign

Washington, D. C.—Franklin D. Roosevelt, back in his old form, launched his fourth-term campaign for the Presidency with a rip-snorting address before 2,000 cheering delegates of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters at the Statler Hotel here.

Flanked on his right by AFL President William Green and on his left by President Daniel J. Tobin of the Teamsters, Mr. Roosevelt drew repeated cheers from his labor audience as he praised the record of American workers in the war and attacked his Republican opponent, Thomas E. Dewey, without mentioning his name.

Most out in election-year affection for social legislation and for labor in general.

The President did not pull his punches nor did he restrain his ridicule of his opponents. He charged that the Republicans with trying to "switch labels" and in attempting to persuade the American people that the Democrats were responsible for the depression, while overlooking the fact that the Republican Party "was responsible for all social progress under the New Deal." He said:

"Imitation may be the sincerest form of flattery—but I am afraid that in this case it is the most obvious common or garden variety of fraud. Who originated the idea of the 'square deal' as the New Deal? I think not."

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